

## **SANTA CLARA GENERAL PLAN**

### **GENERAL PLAN STEERING COMMITTEE – MEETING SUMMARY**

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Meeting Date: March 15, 2010

Location: Santa Clara City Hall

#### **Attendees:**

##### **Steering Committee Members**

##### **Present:**

Joe Kornder, Co-Chair  
Jamie McLeod, Co-Chair  
Thomas Banholzer  
Dixie Baus  
Michele Beasley  
Patricia Finnigan Biocini  
Brian Brennan  
Ian Champeny  
David Dolizier  
Ray Hashimoto  
Joe Head  
Frank Kadlecek  
Jerry Marsalli  
Teresa O'Neill  
Kevin Park  
Alice Pivacek  
Andy Ratermann  
Ed Richards  
Peter Yoon

##### **City Staff:**

Kevin Riley  
Carol Anne Painter  
Julie Moloney  
Alexander Abbe

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### **MEETING OBJECTIVES**

- Discuss the Public Review Draft of the General Plan.
- Provide feedback regarding the Public Review Draft of the General Plan.

Kevin Riley, Director of Planning and Inspection, presented the 2010-2035 Draft General Plan to the Steering Committee. Mr. Riley gave an overview of the process to date, the last input from the Steering Committee, public outreach efforts and future milestones. He indicated that staff will synthesize comments on the Draft General Plan through May

7, 2010, and revise the document as necessary. Carol Anne Painter, City Planner, showed the committee the comments received throughout the entire draft process and explained how staff will collect new comments in a similar manner.

The following represents the concerns and highlights of the Draft, identified by Steering Committee members.

#### TOPICS/ISSUES

- The document should clearly identify the extent of public participation.
- Policy language should clearly serve the needs of the public.
- Conflicting/non-conforming uses need to be addressed.
- Policies should anticipate future conflicts and challenges.
- Places of Assembly and other non-industrial uses in industrial areas need to be addressed.
- Some of the policy language is too “soft.” Firm up language to be more directive.
- Consider the City’s relationship with SCUSD. Seek out opportunities for joint use and long term facilities.
- The Regional Planning Context should include SCUSD’s planning efforts, Mission College and Santa Clara University planning.
- Pages 5-38 to 5-40 - Industrial Land Use precludes places of assembly/sensitive receptors. The plan needs to address existing users.
- Consider sensitive receptors.
- The Discretionary Use Policy that allows upgrading density should be clearer.
- The plan should be clearer about where residential can be built downtown, specifically in mixed-use areas along Franklin Street.
- The Plan should address existing single family homes in mixed-use areas downtown.
- The Plan should identify where new service stations are allowed.
- The policy regarding working with University housing downtown could be problematic. We should work to keep students on campus.
- The Jobs/Housing ratio needs to be more clearly explained.
- Brief explanation of ABAG requirements and how included.
- We need to consider where we will locate new schools, temples, churches, etc. with the increase in population and job growth.
- The policy addressing the Lafayette neighborhood is not clear.
- Land Use – The word, “Encourage,” (5-25) related to pedestrian connections and parks should be stronger.
- In parking section, P3 & P20 seem to be in contrast.
- Page 5-153 only references two organizations for sustainability.

- LEED and B.I.G. standards should be included in the Plan so they can be implemented on new projects.
- Timelines and benchmarks – quantify progress, measure progress.
- Page 5-103 has some vague language. Requirements need to be clear.
- Parking section is vague – direct readers to the Zoning Ordinance for standards.
- Housing in Future Focus Areas.
  - Area should be reserved for industrial and entertainment
  - City needs to get prerequisites in order before thinking about housing in the north
  - Housing north of 101 should be entertainment district – along Great America Parkway
- Do not see any statements about economic vitality – need more.
- Articulate a economic development strategy in the plan.
- Residential north of Caltrain needs to be justified.
- The Plan needs to address the encroachment of housing into commercial/industrial space.
- The Plan needs to justify High Tech growth
- Page 5-111 – Identify and fund 20 acres north of Caltrain – be clear if this means one site or multiple sites.
- 2.4 acres of park/1000 ppl – we’d like 3.0/1000
  - Develop w/in Santa Clara. Don’t rely on other cities for open space.
- Office/Industrial – max 20% manufacturing – shouldn’t have absolutes like this in General Plan.
- Include analysis of where the 20 acre park figure came from.
- Policy 5.3-5 P11 – construction of sidewalks – Identify when sidewalks would be required.
- Policy 5.3-5 P13 – explain what prohibit exceeding density means.
- Churches – Sunnyvale – (Industrial to Residential) ITR and church designations – consider a similar designation.
- Preservation of existing neighborhoods
  - Create historically significant areas for the future
- General Plan leads to development
  - The wording should balance requirements vs. desires
- Need elaboration on prerequisites/timelines
  - Plan should explain if dates are points in time/continuous or “gates” that have to be open. Need clarity of next steps 3-4 years in advance
- Make sure we consider our aging demographics
- Demographic trends are out of our control potential – aging/relocation of baby boomers

- Identify the process to allow Future Focus Area projects now.
- Additional Senior Centers, transportation options
- Implementation strategies specify outcome – language is vague
- Need strong definitions
- Need facilities (outdoor) for seniors – need to coordinate with the schools

These comments are basically related to five themes.

1. Vague or “soft” language
2. Uses in the Industrial Area
3. Jobs/Housing Ratio
4. Enabling development in each phase
5. Community facilities

Vague or “soft” language is appropriate for many of the policies in the General Plan because it is a guiding document. More regulatory language is appropriate for the Zoning Ordinance. State law requires that we include parameters regarding densities and intensities of development in the General Plan, but additional development regulations are located within other documents, such as the Zoning Ordinance and Subdivision Ordinance.

The “jobs/housing” ratio is the number of jobs in the City to employed residents. While there is no direct relationship to housing, and the ratio can change depending upon the City’s demographic make up, it is an indicator of whether or not there is enough housing in the community to serve the people that work here. ABAG projections indicate an increase in seniors, as well as an increase in employed residents. In the General Plan, the increase in population matches the increase in jobs, which will not significantly impact the ratio.

Non-industrial type uses locating in the Industrial land use designations is a growing concern in the City. Uses such as places of assembly and those with sensitive receptors are interested in properties in industrial areas because there is ample space and in most cases, rents are affordable. The General Plan includes policies that prohibit these types of uses in these areas because they can undermine the job base. Non-industrial uses in industrial areas can also be dangerous, due to the common use of hazardous materials. The City Council is currently exploring policy options on how to regulate these types of uses.

As the plan goes through time, it may be appropriate to make amendments to enable appropriate development. Development of the Future Focus Areas is intended to be

initiated through a master plan. There are limited opportunities in the City to build housing, and we must make sure we are not growing for the sake of growing.

As our demographics change, and we add housing units and jobs to the City, we need to be aware of community facilities and services needed. New schools, community centers, senior centers, etc. may need to be sited to serve our changing population.

#### Public Comments

Julia O'Keefe

Ms. O'Keefe asked how the 2.4 acres of parkland per 1000 persons compares to other cities. Ms. Painter responded that we were conservative in our estimate of parkland, not including regional facilities like the Ulistac Natural Area or school facilities.

Doug Hoskin

Mr. Hoskin talked about compatibility with existing properties, and gave an example of potential Regional Mixed-Use next to single family homes. He also brought up density bonuses and asked how they tie in with our compatibility policies. He was concerned about the potential traffic impacts of narrowing El Camino Real and the potential for traffic and parking to be diverted onto the residential streets. He asked why parking is determined by the average need and not the peak need. Steering Committee Member Kornder noted that the vehicle miles traveled are projected to decrease with the implementation of this Plan.

The Committee Chair adjourned the meeting to be reconvened at the Joint City Council/Planning Commission/General Plan Steering Committee meeting on March 23, 2010 at 5:30 p.m.